

SURVIVORS OF THE LADY FRANKLIN BAY EXPEDITION.

JANUARY 26, 1897.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House and ordered to be printed.

Mr. FENTON, from the Committee on Military Affairs, submitted the following

REPORT.

[To accompany S. 1277.]

The Committee on Military Affairs, to whom was referred the bill (S. 1277) to place certain survivors of the Lady Franklin Bay Expedition on the retired list of enlisted men of the Army, having considered the same, recommend that it do pass, and adopt the Senate report by Mr. Shoup, which is herewith appended.

[Senate Report No. 1093, Fifty-fourth Congress, first session.]

The Committee on Military Affairs, to whom was referred the bill (S. 1277) providing for the appointment as lieutenants on the retired list of certain survivors of the Lady Franklin Bay Expedition, have examined the same and submit the following report:

The bill authorizes the President to appoint Henry Biederbick, Julius R. Frederick, Francis Long, and Maurice Connell, survivors of the Lady Franklin Bay Expedition, second lieutenants of infantry in the United States Army, and to place them on the retired list.

As is well known, this expedition was organized under the provisions of the acts of Congress approved May 1, 1880, and March 3, 1881, to establish a station north of the eighty-first degree of north latitude, at or near Lady Franklin Bay, for the purpose of scientific observation and exploration in the Arctic seas. Gen. A. W. Greely, Fifth Cavalry, acting signal officer, was assigned to the command of the expeditionary force by direction of the President. Twenty-five officers and enlisted men of the United States Army were assigned to duty with this force, and General Greely was authorized to employ Dr. Octave Pavy, of Greenland, for duty as surgeon. It is a deplorable fact that 19 of these men died in the Arctic regions; 13 of them died of starvation. The sufferings and privations of these men can not be described. Four of the survivors, the beneficiaries named in the bill, have been discharged from the Army; two of these, Biederbick and Frederick, for disability, and Long and Connell under the law reducing the corps.

Their military record is as follows:

Henry Biederbick served in the Army as private in Company G, Seventeenth Infantry, from June 14, 1879, to November 22, 1883, and as hospital steward from the latter date to January 6, 1885, when he was discharged for disability.

Julius R. Frederick served in the Army as private in Troop L, Second Cavalry, from September 11, 1876, to August 1, 1884, when he was transferred to the Signal Corps. He was discharged for disability, a sergeant, May 11, 1885.

Francis Long served in the Army as private in Troop G, Second Cavalry, from June 27, 1873, to June 27, 1878; as private, Company F, Ninth Infantry, and in the Signal Corps from July 24, 1878, to June 30, 1891, when he was discharged, as sergeant in the Signal Corps, under the law reducing the corps.

Maurice Connell served in the Army as private in Troop B, Third Cavalry, from July 25, 1871, to December 9, 1884, and in the Signal Corps from that date until June 30, 1891, when he was discharged, a sergeant, by reduction of the corps.

General Greely, in his report of this expedition to the Chief Signal Officer of the Army, June 30, 1885, on page 93, after referring to the arduous labors, heroic endurance, and unflinching determination of those who lost their lives in this expedition, says:

"It would be equally unjust not to mention the services of the living (survivors). The lack of precedent forbade the War Department from confirming appointments and promotions made by me in the exigencies of my position. The necessity of maintaining the dignity of the service likewise interfered to their detriment when public interest was in a way of rewarding them with moderate fortunes. Two of these men, Hospital Steward Henry Biederbick and Sergt. J. R. Frederick, have been discharged from the service, on surgeon's certificate of disability, and, in a maimed condition, are adventuring the gain of their livelihood. The three remaining are now members of the Signal Service, on application of the Chief Signal Officer. As a reward in some way commensurate with the successful work done by them and the extraordinary suffering entailed through no fault of their own, I respectfully recommend that their Arctic services may be considered as rendering all these men eligible for appointment for the retired list of the Army, as of the grades of signal sergeants and hospital steward."

A bill to place two of the beneficiaries named in the bill, Francis Long and Maurice Connell, on the retired list passed the Senate during the Fifty-second Congress, and was reported favorably by the Committee on Military Affairs in the House of Representatives, but was not reached for action. The report of the Senate Committee on Military Affairs on the bill is herewith submitted and made a part of this report:

The Committee on Military Affairs, to whom was referred the bill (S. 2783) authorizing the President to place upon the retired list of the Army Sergeant Long and others, late of the Signal Corps, United States Army, survivors of the Lady Franklin Bay Expedition, having had the same under consideration, beg leave to submit the following report:

The bill provides:

"That the President of the United States be, and he is hereby, authorized and directed to place upon the retired list of the Army, with the retired pay of the grade last held by them, Francis Long, late sergeant, Signal Corps, United States Army, and Maurice Connell, late sergeant, Signal Corps, United States Army, who have served in the Army over seventeen years, of which three years were with the Lady Franklin Bay Expedition."

The following correspondence with the War Department explains the present status of Long and Connell:

COMMITTEE ON MILITARY AFFAIRS, UNITED STATES SENATE,

March 31, 1892.

Respectfully transmitted to the honorable the Secretary of War with request that this committee may be furnished with any information relative to this measure in possession of the War Department.

By direction of the chairman.

W. P. HUXFORD, *Clerk.*

[First indorsement.]

WAR DEPARTMENT, May 11, 1892.

Respectfully returned to the chairman of the Committee on Military Affairs, United States Senate, inviting attention to the inclosed report of the Adjutant-General, dated April 6, last, upon the bill.

The Chief Signal Officer, to whom the bill was also referred, recommends that, in view of the sufferings of the men named in the bill during their connection with the Lady Franklin Bay Expedition, favorable consideration be given thereto.

S. B. ELKINS, *Secretary of War.*

WAR DEPARTMENT, ADJUTANT-GENERAL'S OFFICE,

Washington, April 6, 1892.

SIR: I have the honor to return herewith bill authorizing the President to place upon the retired list of the Army Sergeant Long and others, late of the Signal Corps, survivors of the Lady Franklin Bay Expedition (S. 2783), and in compliance with the request of the Committee on Military Affairs, United States Senate, to report as follows in regard to the services of the men:

Francis Long enlisted June 27, 1873, was assigned to Troop G, Second Cavalry, and discharged June 27, 1878, by expiration of service, a private; he reenlisted July 24, 1878, in Company F, Ninth Infantry, and was discharged July 23, 1883, by expiration of service, a private; reenlisted July 24, 1883, in the same company, was transferred to the Signal Corps, and discharged July 23, 1888, by expiration of service, a

sergeant; he reenlisted July 24, 1888, in the Signal Corps, and was discharged June 30, 1891, a sergeant, under act of Congress approved October 1, 1890—reduction of the force of the Signal Corps. His total service is not quite eighteen years.

Maurice Connell enlisted July 25, 1871, was assigned to Troop B, Third Cavalry, and discharged July 25, 1876, by expiration of service, a private; he reenlisted in the same troop July 25, 1876, and was discharged July 24, 1881, by expiration of service, a private; he reenlisted in same troop July 25, 1881, was transferred to the Signal Corps, and discharged July 24, 1886, by expiration of service, a second-class private; he reenlisted August 23, 1886, in the Signal Corps, and was discharged June 30, 1891, a sergeant, under act of Congress of October 1, 1890—reduction of the force of the Signal Corps. His total service is not quite twenty years.

Act of Congress of February 14, 1885, amended by act of September 30, 1890, provides for the retirement of enlisted men after thirty years' service, allowing double time for service during the war of the rebellion.

No enlisted man has so far been placed on the retired list except his case was fully covered by the acts above mentioned.

Very respectfully,

R. WILLIAMS,
Assistant Adjutant-General.

THE SECRETARY OF WAR.

GENERAL OFFICE, WAR DEPARTMENT,
Washington City, May 9, 1892.

SIR: I have the honor to return herewith Senate bill 2783, Fifty-second Congress, and strongly urge its passage by the Senate.

In connection with this bill the Chief Signal Officer has the honor to invite attention to the fact that Sergeants Long and Connell served three years with the United States Polar Expedition, one of the international scientific schemes, known commonly as the Lady Franklin Bay Expedition, and during the last year at Cape Sabine suffered such tortures by cold, exposure, and slow starvation as brought them to the verge of the grave. Nothing has ever been done for either of these men, and now, at an age of 40 years, unable to perform hard field service which would devolve upon them if they entered the line, and unable to pass the rigid physical examination for reenlistment, they have been mustered out of the service (on July 1, 1891) and have thus lost all the accrued advantages for retirement. It is strongly urged that this favorable consideration be given these men by the bill referred to, which, if it is questioned as to its legality owing to the fact that the names of the men are inserted, can be amended by substituting for their names the words, "the surviving enlisted men of the Lady Franklin Bay Expedition."

It may not be inappropriate to state that the American expedition to Lady Franklin Bay was the most successful in the record of Arctic expeditions during the years of 1881 to 1883, in which years it made an unbroken set of scientific observations, for which the expedition was planned and set forth; that it also made the most northerly latitude ever attained by man; that it extended the known coast of Greenland more than a hundred miles to the northeast; that it determined the physical character of Grinnell Land—probably the most remarkable spot within the Arctic Circle; and that all its labors, whether in the field of science or discovery, were made without injury or loss of any member of the expedition, nor did any officer or man sustain any injuries impairing his physical condition. Moreover, the party made an Arctic boat retreat for 500 miles southward to meet the promised relief, and landed at Cape Sabine with every man of the original party in health, with its scientific records, diaries, and all the important instruments intact; and the sufferings and death resulted from the failure of the cooperating expeditions. Despite this record, neither the expedition as a whole nor its commanding officer as its representative has received one act of commendation or recognition either from the War Department or from Congress. Its commander and members have meanwhile received the highest awards and honors within the power of the scientific and geographic societies of the civilized world.

The record of its labors was submitted in the briefest period that has ever elapsed between the return of an expedition and the making of the full report bearing thereon, and the recommendations of the undersigned as the commanding officer of that expedition have never elicited anything of a commendatory character from the Department to which the expedition belonged nor from the legislative branch of the Government which authorized it; so that, after all its success and the courage and determination of its dead officers and of its enlisted men, there is on record to this date no commendatory word for the living, no expressed sympathy with their sufferings, no words of regret to the families from whose members came the victims of the expedition, nor a word of commendation to set forth to the Army or the country the belief of the War Department or of Congress that the duty done was well and properly performed.

This bill offers an opportunity where the labors, merits, and sufferings of two of the men at least may be recognized. It may perhaps be quoted that the appointment of David L. Brainard to be a second lieutenant was a military recognition of this expedition, but such is not the fact, since every obstacle was thrown in the way of this appointment, which the President made only by discharging the man from the military service and making it as from civil life.

Very respectfully,

A. W. GREELY, *Chief Signal Officer.*

THE SECRETARY OF WAR.

It thus appears from the above that Sergts. Francis Long and Maurice Connell served three years with the Lady Franklin Bay Expedition and during the last year at Cape Sabine, where they suffered such tortures by cold, exposure, and slow starvation as brought them to the verge of the grave. Some provision has been made for all the other survivors of that ill-fated expedition, but these men's services and suffering have been wholly unrecognized, and they have been turned out of the Army, after long and faithful service, entirely unprovided for. Your committee believe the least that can be done for them is to put them on the retired list with the rank held by them when discharged June 30, 1891, by reason of the act of Congress approved October 1, 1890, reducing the force of the Signal Corps.

Your committee therefore report the bill back to the Senate and recommend its passage, with a slight amendment to the title, striking out "sergeant" and inserting "sergeants" and in the same line striking out "others" and inserting "Connell," so as to make it conform to the body of the bill.

The act of Congress of February 14, 1885, amended by act of September 30, 1890, provides for the retirement of enlisted men after thirty years' service, allowing double time for service during the war of the rebellion. While neither of these men served quite twenty years, they were separated from the service and lost their accrued advantages for retirement, through no fault of their own; and in view of the sufferings, privations, and hardships endured by them, and which resulted in the death of three-fourths of their party, your committee believe that the Arctic service of the survivors of this remarkable expedition should be considered as sufficient to entitle them to be placed on the retired list. The following substitute is therefore reported, which provides for their retirement as sergeants of the Signal Corps, and its passage earnestly recommended:

"That the President be, and he is hereby, authorized to cause Henry Biederbick, Julius R. Frederick, Francis Long, and Maurice Connell, survivors of the Lady Franklin Bay Expedition, to be enlisted as sergeants of the Signal Corps of the Army, and to place them on the retired list of the Army with the pay and allowances of sergeants of the Signal Corps who have been retired after continuous active service of fifteen years: *Provided*, That said pay and allowances shall be in lieu of any and all pensions that may have heretofore been granted to the persons hereinbefore named."

Amend the title so as to read: "A bill to place Henry Biederbick, Julius R. Frederick, Francis Long, and Maurice Connell on the retired list of enlisted men of the Army."